THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106
TELEPHONE: GARFIELD 1-7340

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MASTER BRONZE SCULPTURE FROM INDIA IS NOW ON EXHIBITION AT ART MUSEUM

An exhibition of 61 MASTER BRONZES OF INDIA opens today in the special exhibition galleries of The Cleveland Museum of Art and continues through February 27. The exhibit ranges over 1400 years with sculpture from the second through the sixteenth centuries. It is the first major, comprehensive exhibition of Indian bronzes shown in this country.

The emphasis of the exhibit is on the Hindu art of ninth through thirteenth century southern India where influence from foreign cultures was the least prevalent. Bronze images representing Buddhist and Jain religious traditions from northern, central and western India complete the collection of masterpieces which stand on a par with the great sculpture of all other cultures and periods.

The bronzes in the exhibit were used exclusively as icons --- symbolic representations of the complex pantheon of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain gods sculpted to convey their various powers and activities. The artist (or group of artists) remained anonymous and worked under strict artistic tradition. The Indian sculptor did not express his personal feelings, as Western artists attempted to, but communicated the idea of the deity as perfectly and powerfully as possible. Some of the works in the exhibition were for private worship and others for worship in a temple. The images could have been commissioned by laymen or priests.

With a few exceptions, the bronzes in the show were cast by the "lost wax" method, a process which renders each work unique because the mold must be broken to get at the sculpture. In connection with the exhibition MASTER BRONZES OF INDIA, the Museum has erected in the North corridor an exhibit of photographs which explain in some detail the "lost wax" method --- used not only in ancient times, but now as well.

MASTER BRONZES OF INDIA was jointly organized by the Art Institute of Chicago, the Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City, The Cleveland Museum of Art and Asia House Gallery in New York. Lenders to the show were the Institute, the Cleveland museum, the Nelson Gallery, two private collectors and fourteen other museums in the United States, Canada and England. An illustrated catalog with text accompanies the exhibition which will next be seen at Asia House.

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